2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

585
583
127

able for the total number of marital unions formed during the years, so it is impossible to know the percentage of amasiado unions throughout the entire population.

TABLE 8
CIVIL MARRIAGES BY AGE GROUPS

585
582
162

Males		Females	
minors under 18	1	minors under 15	2
18-22	4	15-19	6
23-27	6	20-24	7
28-32	5	25-29	2
33-37	1	30-34	1
38-43	2	35-39	1
	19		19

585
583

There are occasions when a couple marry in the church only after having lived together for many years, at which time their children may be the principal witnesses at the wedding. Such a wedding always gives the couple a feeling of satisfaction and well-being, for there is sometimes a certain shame attached to the amasiado state, especially when it is necessary to fill in official forms such as birth registration, the census, or registration at the Institute of Vila Recôncavo. A woman who can say "meu esposo" or "meu marido" (my husband) feels a certain superiority over the one who can only say "meu homem" (my man).

842

The attitude toward children in Class C is somewhat ambivalent. Married women with as many as ten or twelve children may say they never wanted children, but simply "took what God sent." Frequently little girls pray that their mother will have another child so they may take care of it. All girls from the age of seven to thirteen or fourteen seem to like small children. There are few men who do not want children. Even though the mother may say she did not want them, she always seems pleased with them after they are born, and children, especially boys, are well loved and spoiled. Part of the women's gossip is often about another woman who is about to have a baby, and many women with five or six children of their own accuse others of having children "como ratos" (like rats) because they have eight or nine.

[521]

There is no use of contraceptives in Class C, although they

[Class C Families]

842

are known to the majority. It was pointed out by the men with a laugh that such things were unprocurable in town because the institute drugstore is run by a friar. They are obtainable in Centro and Salvador, but they are expensive, and the men say they are embarrassed to ask for them. One young couple sent to São Paulo for some injections to be given to the wife to prevent conception, but they did no good. The couple had found an announcement of the injections in a magazine, and since they wanted to limit their family to the one child they already had, they tried other means. They now have three children in spite of their efforts at prevention.

847 [278] There also are local remedies which are supposed to produce abortions. They consist of herbal teas and for the most part are supposed to be effective only up to the third month of pregnancy. Aluman, coqueiro root, orelha de pau, pitanga, mil homem root, and melão de São Caetano are all supposed to be effective. Few women will admit to having used them, although they all know about them. Figures on the number of natural abortions are almost impossible to obtain, for most often there is no record at all. The mother does not go to the doctor; she simply buries tal bobagem (such nonsense) in the 843 back yard. Those who admit having had miscarriages say they came about because of a fall, or frequently because of a great fright such as seeing a snake on the road. Most women do not 841 515 keep track of their menstrual periods, and according to the town doctor their personal hygiene leaves much to be desired. 864 Little or no information is directly passed between father and sons or mother and daughters concerning sexual matters. Each generation is left to find out for itself.

838 There are a few male sexual aberrants in town, known as "veados" (literally, "deer," but slang for homosexuals), and they are well known. A middle-aged fisherman, Patío, is the center of such activities. He is married and has several children. When his wife found out about his extramarital activities she took the children and left him, terribly shamed. This happened several years ago, and since then this man has worked up quite a trade, mostly among unmarried men, though [548] there are at least three married men who go to him also. Their excuse is that there are not enough women in the town, and since there are no prostitutes they go to him, although they do not like it. The married men say it is because their wives are ill or away, and they do not want complications with some girl. Patío, however, regales the daily gossip groups

4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll
BRAZIL SLI

BB
563*
BB
[826]
BB
563 *
165
BB
[842] •
B
BB
563 *
826

in the United States always serves to call out the traditional responses long associated with variations in social status.

Today there exists in Bahia the belief that the population is gradually but persistently "whitening," a conviction difficult to understand, given the heavy preponderance of Africans among the population which originally migrated to this area and the negligible number of European immigrants in recent times.

The probable greater mortality of blacks may in part account for this change. According to a recent unpublished study, the infantile death rate among the lower classes in Bahia, which, as we have seen, are principally black and dark mulatto, is approximately twice that of the upper classes; and, in 1932, deaths under five years of age constituted nearly one-third of all deaths for that year (1,698 out of 5,407). At the same time there does not seem to be any marked difference in fertility between the races.

At any rate, Bahians frequently comment on an appreciable change in the color of the population within their memories. One continually hears remarks like that of a mixed-blood citizen who said:

> Formerly, the *pretos* (blacks) were the most numerous group in Bahia, the *pardos* (browns) next, and the *brancos* (whites) last. Today, the *pardos* are in the majority, the *brancos* next, and the *pretos* last. I am convinced that before long the *pretos* will have completely disappeared. The *brancos* will soon overtake and, in the course of time, completely absorb the *pardos*.

The mixed-bloods tend to look upon themselves as transition points in an inevitable whitening process. Pride in the present advanced stage is common, and the end result is eagerly anticipated. From the mulattoes, as from the whites, one frequently hears the declaration: "We Brazilians are